

California State University, Long Beach
Themes Proposal
1 May 2018

1. Executive Summary: brief high-level overview of the themes and their importance to the institution

California State University, Long Beach is proposing three themes for its Institutional Report for Reaffirmation: Inclusive Excellence, the Public Good, and Intellectual Achievement. These three themes have permeated all aspects of the university, from student life and development, faculty and staff success, information technology, and facilities and sustainability. First proposed by the Provost and President after years of campus dialogue, these three strategic priorities now form the bedrock of President Conoley's Beach 2030 initiative, a long-range institutional plan to fully realize the mission and vision of the institution.

2. Overview of the institution: a brief description, not to exceed a few paragraphs, of the values, mission, and history of the institution

Founded in 1949, California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is one of the largest and most comprehensive public universities in the nation, enrolling approximately 37,000 students. The University is located in Long Beach, the seventh largest city in California, on a beautifully landscaped 320-acre campus near the ocean and in close proximity to the thriving downtown Long Beach area.

In keeping with its mission as "a diverse, student-centered, globally-engaged public university committed to providing highly-valued undergraduate and graduate educational opportunities through superior teaching, research, creative activity, and service for the people of California and the world," CSULB adopted the three strategic priorities of inclusive excellence, intellectual achievement, and the public good.

These strategic priorities are also aligned with the vision of the university which is to change lives by "expanding educational opportunities, championing creativity, and preparing leaders for a changing world."

The university is focused on fulfilling its vision. For example, CSULB is nationally recognized as one of the nation's best values in higher education, offering a high-quality, affordable education. The campus' focus on student success has resulted in the highest graduation rates in its history; CSULB improved its graduation rates significantly in 2016-2017; the 4-year graduation rate increased by 50% from the previous year (going from 16% to 25%), surpassing the Graduation Initiative 2025 goal for 2019.

3. Process for development of the themes: a brief description, not to exceed a few paragraphs, of how themes were identified and who was involved in the process.

For many years, the campus reported on issues related to several strategic priorities that were clearly tied to separate campus divisions: student success, academic quality, service excellence, campus life, and sustainable environment. Public good was added to this list in 2016. Many

stakeholders across the institution engaged in dialogue about these issues central to the mission and vision of the university, and these issues were then included in strategic planning. The strategic plan lost focus, in part because of the multiplicity of narratives pulling priorities in different directions.

The university welcomed a new President on campus in 2014 and a new Provost in 2015, and they worked together to articulate the three strategic priorities that inform all stakeholders on campus. These priorities were introduced in 2017, and were then vetted by senior staff, the Academic Senate, deans, alumni, students, and community and adopted by the campus community. They are now the foundation for the Beach 2030 strategic planning.

4. Description of each theme

a. What is going to be undertaken?

The three themes represent the values of California State University, Long Beach. Over the past several years, there have been initiatives related to one theme or another, but they were not tied together. Neither were the initiatives bound together in terms of campuswide, cross-divisional assessment initiatives. For these reasons, the priorities have been constructed as umbrella themes. That is, multiple initiatives operate under each theme but also overlap with each other. Consequently, a major task for the institution in adopting these themes is to create coordinated, assessable initiatives that connect across divisions and units. The first step in this coordination is the partnership established with the Institute for the Future, which will be launched officially at Fall 2018 Convocation.

Specific discussion of each theme follows:

Intellectual Achievement – CSULB’s core academic purpose is to graduate students with degrees that give students knowledge to succeed in specific careers, provide them with transferable skills to adjust to new opportunities in an ever-changing market-place, and educate them to be productive and responsible global citizens. At CSULB this effort is called the “Highly Valued Degree Initiative” and we currently have several initiatives underway to meet this goal. The campus initiated revision of general education policy and also academic preparedness placement and support for English and Math. To meet the challenges many of our students have related to writing proficiency, we are piloting a “Writing Across the Curriculum” program to infuse writing practice and feedback in disciplines as well as general education, and we are creating a new space for a campus-wide writing support center. We are also piloting learning communities within select programs. The institution plans to enhance professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, with the goal of creating enhanced learning opportunities for students. Many of these initiatives have been piloted with small cohorts. As we move forward with our reaffirmation process, we look forward to assessing the efficacy and outcomes of these initiatives to create a campus wide plan supporting the intellectual achievement of our students. Additionally, in conjunction with the Chancellor’s Office Graduation Initiative 2025

(GI2025), the institution plans to better define and measure student success and increase persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

Public Good – CSULB, like all institutions of higher education, faces significant challenges, both political and economic. In particular, the institution’s commitment to shared values and inclusiveness comes in the midst of unprecedented attacks against higher education broadly and faculty and students specifically. Not losing sight of its commitment to serving the needs of all Californians, CSULB is crafting a path that clearly articulates the specific meaning of its degrees in the landscape of Southern California while maintaining its integrity. In its 2020 Institutional Report, CSULB will address several key questions: why do more students apply to this CSU campus than other CSUs? What is the demographic makeup of faculty, staff, and students? What makes the experience and degree at CSULB distinctive? How do degrees from CSULB serve the needs of the California and global workforce and help cultivate responsible and engaged citizens? In other words, what does it mean to graduate with a degree from California State University, Long Beach?

The WSCUC *Handbook of Accreditation* states "in addition to being a private good for individual students, education is a public good contributing to shared prosperity, a successful democracy, and a well-functioning society" (49). CSULB embraces its mandate to raise the educational attainment of the region and contribute to important policy debates. In addition to being recognized as a top university for moving students into the middle class, it has also received national recognition for its partnership with Long Beach Unified School District in the Long Beach College Promise program. Further, the Center for Community Engagement places hundreds of students each year in various organizations, linking educational objectives to larger outreach efforts in educational, health, business, artistic, and high-tech sectors.

In assessing an institution's commitment to the public good, WSCUC's *Handbook of Accreditation (2013)* closely aligns it to transparent analysis of student success rates, stating that "accounting for quality is a matter of public trust" (3). Therefore, one step in assessing the integrity and meaning of the degree is measuring retention, persistence, and graduation rates over time, and new initiatives will help the institution remain transparent in tracking student academic achievement. The institution has adopted Tableau, a data analysis software, and has a dedicated group of data fellows who will track and assess other key elements of student success including, but not limited to: data on under-represented minorities, first-generation college enrollment, as well as gender, ethnic, and class identity. The institution's relationship with the platform, specifically its powerful data visualization tools, is still in its infancy, and the Institutional Report for Reaffirmation process will bring into sharper focus how the campus might analyze data in relation to the public good.

Inclusive Excellence – The University’s commitment to Inclusive Excellence is well exemplified in the #NoBarriers communications campaign. The campaign describes the University’s work to eradicate barriers to student success. These barriers may exist

across financial, social, academic, heritage, individual difference, and political sectors. The campus accomplished many goals in this commitment: it added gender-inclusive restrooms; it continues to integrate multiple cultural resource centers together; it developed a 1st Amendment website providing valuable information about dealing with hate speech; and it created a Dream Success Center for undocumented students.

Strategies to remove barriers are developed every day as new information becomes available. For example, the institution hired an ADA consultant to identify concerns, and will provide funding to facilitate removal of barriers on campus. Additionally, to better provide role models for an increasingly diverse student population, CSULB is also committed enhancing faculty diversity and faculty professional development. A longer-term goal is to expand and assess the institution's use of BeachSync, which is designed to measure student engagement and sense of belonging. The institution is currently planning to resume assessment and program review of student affairs and co-curricular activities, which will be an important addition to inclusive excellence. Specifically, at the time of the site visit in 2020, the institution will be analyzing longitudinal data regarding reductions in the achievement gap for historically underrepresented minorities, in particular the gap in the six-year graduation rate.

b. Which specific standards and CFRs are tied to the theme?

Because the strategic priorities encompass the entire operations of the institution, all four standards are connected to the themes. As noted below, there are multiple CFRs connected to each theme as well.

Inclusive Excellence – 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.6

Public Good – 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.2, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 4.6, 4.7

Intellectual Achievement – 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5

As mentioned in Section 4a, the three priorities encompass all four standards and multiple CFRs, threading the various silos of the institution together more seamlessly than in the past. For example, the institution cannot plot a course for inclusive excellence without linking Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, and Institutional Research.

c. Why is it important for the institution to conduct this work (the rationale)?

This work is central to the mission of the university as it continues to define itself in relation to challenges and issues facing higher education in the twenty-first century. For this reason, these priorities are not set on a traditional three-year plan, but instead on a 10-year plan, looking ahead to 2030 and beyond. In order for the institution to continue to offer highly-valued degrees that challenge and transform its students and prepare them for the global workforce and citizenship in this century, CSULB must focus on the greater good higher education serves, and to do that well, it must foster intellectual achievement of

students, faculty, and staff and be as inclusive as possible. The world is rapidly changing technologically, demographically, and educationally, and CSULB sees these priorities as a vehicle for championing higher education.

d. What work, if any, has already been done in this area?

These three themes are embedded in the 2017 – 2020 Strategic Plan, and some work has been accomplished. For example, the institution has accomplished some of its infrastructure goals by expanding parking on South campus, by building the Student Success Center in the central quad on upper campus (to be opened January 2019), and has reorganized Academic Technology Services and Information Technology Services. Further, orientation sessions for lecturers and new chairs have been formalized, providing greater continuity for teaching, learning, and administration at the department level.

e. What does the institution expect to accomplish?

There are many goals embedded in the Beach 2030 Plan that this Institutional Report can help bring into sharper focus. The institution plans to develop smarter and more sophisticated measures of student research engagement to their post-baccalaureate work, thereby developing more longitudinal information to capture student success.

To help the institution better construct its vision for the future, the non-profit research firm Institute for the Future will work with faculty, staff, students, and administrators on problem solving and goal setting. Three administrators trained in Futurist Thinking presented first steps at the 2018 WSCUC ARC.

f. How will the project be assessed or evaluated?

The institution has a long-term assessment framework in place to conduct indirect and direct assessments within a traditional academic framework. Other in-house indirect methods are being developed, including a campus climate survey. The institution is resuming co-curricular assessment and the Directors of Assessment in Academic and Student Affairs are partnering to develop additional direct measures to evaluate and report on the variety of data the institution collects from these themes.

5. Timeline for each theme?

a. When does the project begin (or when did it) and when is it expected to end?

The themes the institution chose are part of the 2017 – 2020 Strategic Plan, but the institution embedded them into its 10-year outlook for CSULB 2030. Because these are ongoing items directly related to the mission of the university, there is no predetermined end date, and will continue long after the reaffirmation review.

b. Does it continue after the reaffirmation review?

As mentioned, this project is part of a long-term reimagining of the institution's priorities as laid out in the Beach 2030 Plan. Consequently, when WSCUC conducts its site visit in 2020, the institution will be in the early phases of implementation of these themes.

c. As appropriate, how does the timing integrate with other complementary institutional activities?

Many of these activities are directly aligned to initiatives adopted across the California State University. GI 2025, the Chancellor's Office initiative, is seamlessly aligned with the university's commitment to the public good and highly-valued degrees. EO 1071, for example, ensures that all options within a degree program share at least 51% of its curriculum with other options. To maintain the integrity of the degree programs at the institution, assessment of the curriculum will be conducted and where necessary changes will be made. Additionally, there are Executive Orders (EOs) that are reshaping general education and what is often referred to as remediation. The result of these EOs is an opportunity for the CSULB community to reframe its educational priorities and reimagine the meaning of a liberal education in the twenty-first century.

6. Resources: what human and financial capital will be needed?

The institution has made a commitment to tie the strategic priorities to financial planning. Therefore, the campus needs to follow where the plan leads, including incorporating restructuring plans and absorbing financial costs associated with assessing goals within the three priorities or implementing changes necessary as a result of these campuswide assessments. The institution is embarking on a long-range effort to transform CSULB into a top institution of higher education competitive in the twenty-first century, and investment in this future is essential.

With its partnership with the Institute for the Future, the institution has committed to incorporating all stakeholders into the process. Clearly, some members of the campus community will be more involved than others, but the President has made clear that Beach 2030 is about “building [CSULB’s] collective capacity for thinking about and shaping a shared future.”

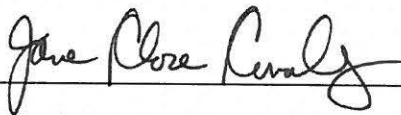
7. Institutional stipulation: signature of the CEO, attesting that the project has her/his endorsement, on the IR certification form. **(see next page)**

INSTITUTIONAL REPORT CERTIFICATION FORM

To: WASC Senior College and University Commission
Re: 2020 Reaffirmation of Accreditation, Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation Themes Proposal
From: Jane Close Conoley, Ph.D.
California State University, Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90840

This report is submitted in support of our institution's accreditation review.

I affirm the accuracy of the information presented and the institution's intention to comply fully with WSCUC's Standards and policies.

Signed:  _____
Chief Executive Officer

Name: Jane Close Conoley

Title: President

Date: June 4, 2018